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Artistic, though never artful, nicely proportioned in all their parts to the author's purpose and to the needs of those for whom he writes, exact in emphasis; above all as convincing through good faith as through knowledge or wit, these sketches by M. Lauzanne are both informing and impressive.

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DEMOCRACY AND THE HUMAN EQUATION. By Alleyne Ireland. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

Is Alleyne Ireland intent upon restating certain evident truths about government or is he endeavoring to define a standpoint from which a new departure may hopefully be made? His whole book is so much in the nature of an essay—an *endeavor towards* some conclusion—that it is a little hard to answer this question.

Certainly, the author has collected and has stated in exact and original language, some not unusual criticisms of democratic government and of the popular conception of such government. He perceives everywhere a tendency to rhapsodize about government, to regard it as something that it is not and to consider it capable of doing what it cannot do. He reminds us that government cannot change human nature, that the "human equation," that unreckoned factor, is fundamental. Nor can education make us capable of democracy, if we have not the latent aptitude for it. An excursion into biology convinces us that inherited traits are practically unalterable. You can *ad-ducate* a man (to use an expressive word of Mr. Ireland's coinage) almost indefinitely; that is you can go on teaching him new facts; but you cannot *educate* him beyond a certain point—you cannot *bring out* what is not in him. Our government, moreover, which was intended to be, and which ought to be, a representative government, tends continually to become government by delegation—quite a different thing; for government by delegation implies all the weaknesses of which democracy has been traditionally accused. Of late years, persistent efforts have been made to secure direct legislation through such devices as the initiative, referendum, and recall, and more recently the menace of Bolshevism and of all the various subversive tendencies for which Bolshevism is a convenient label, has become too serious to be disregarded. But have we the virtues of democracy? These virtues, Mr. Ireland thinks, are more or less mythical; democracy has no real causal connection with many of the values associated with it, and some of these values are faiths rather than realities. What, for example, is freedom? The author subjects the whole concept to a destructive analysis, and seems to show that, in any reasonable interpretation of the term, freedom has little application to conditions in the United States to-day. The whole exposition, though keen and forcible, may be a little trying to readers other than those whose habit of mind is rhapsodic.

Perhaps it would be a fair summing up of much that Mr. Ireland writes in this book to say that while democracy (which came into being gradually and more or less fortuitously as the reaction from certain abuses) has been fairly

successful in preventing the oppressions it was designed to guard against, it has succeeded in little more than this; and that an ideal representative government, which is the best medium between autocracy and democracy, seems scarcely workable among the American people to-day.

All this may be granted. But what is the conclusion? What guidance for future thinking, not to say future action, can we derive from Mr. Ireland's extraordinary synthesis of criticisms—biological and other—upon the current ideas? In the first place, of course, we must adhere as closely as possible to the representative principle, have minds of our own, and oppose the initiative, referendum, and recall. In the second place, we must get ready to advance along three new lines. These are, (1) the science of eugenics, (2) a new science of government based on psychological principles, and (3) a limitation of the suffrage.

Just here one finds obstacles. If eugenics and scientific government are imposed upon us—through the control or leadership of the few, of course—are we not going to incur some of those very evils which democracy aims to prevent? For the solid core of truth in democracy is just this: that while leadership must be with the few, the few are never to be trusted not to oppress when they have the power to do so. We are blameworthy in our general disregard of the expert; but God help us if the experts rule us! Indeed, Mr. Ireland's programme—if such it may be called—seems to require, for its acceptance and for its wise and just application, exactly that higher level of character and intelligence which he says does not exist in our present democracy.

It would appear, then, that we must muddle along, making the best of the kind of government that we have and resisting disruptive influences as well as our present level of intelligence and character permits, until some unforeseen change occurs or until some superior power intervenes. When the requisite stage of evolution is reached, then the complete programme of eugenics and scientific government will be forthcoming, and then, no doubt, there will be no difficulty about its application.

Mr. Ireland's criticism is broad in its scope, and it is of the kind that promises well because it draws ideas from many different sources; but it hardly aims to be more than thought-provoking.

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THE POEMS OF HENRY VAN DYKE: A New and Revised Edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Perhaps no American man of letters since Longfellow has produced a larger amount of really commendable, uniformly good, and well finished verse than has come from the practised pen of that admirable scholar and writer, Dr. Henry Van Dyke. It is of Longfellow that one thinks as one reads these highly literary poems, by no means lacking in "soul". The broad culture, the cordial tone, the simplicity of heart, the purity of feeling, are all there—with now and then a touch of felicity in expression or a hint of originality in thought